

THE MIDDLE EAST AND AMERICAN SECURITY POLICY

Report

of

Senator Henry M. Jackson

to the

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

United States Senate

December 1970

Letter of Transmittal

December 21, 1970

The Honorable John Stennis  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Stennis:

On November 16 I returned from participation in the North Atlantic Assembly meeting in Europe, followed by a visit to Israel. As you know, I have been concerned for some time by the threat to vital American interests arising out of the deepening involvement of the Soviet Union in the Middle East.

Section 501 of Public Law 91-441 (91st Congress), which I introduced in June 1970, was enacted in response to this serious and continuing threat, which the Congress has declared to be a "clear and present danger to world peace."

I traveled to Israel to assess the nature and extent of Soviet penetration of the Middle East, to discuss with high Israeli officials the nature of their concern, and to determine those military and political measures that the United States might prudently undertake in support of the stability of the region as a whole and the security of the state of Israel.

In Israel I was able to travel extensively. I visited the Golan Heights, where I met with the Commanding General of the Northern Command, and from there followed the present cease-fire lines along the Jordan, the scene of considerable terrorist activity and cross-border shelling. I had occasion to visit the northern Sinai, traveling through Gaza and Al Arish to Al Qantarrah and Israeli positions along the Suez Canal. I had an opportunity to discuss the security situation in the Sinai with the armor Commander of the area, and to visit Israeli fortifications at various points along the Bar-Lev Line.

In Jerusalem I had a most helpful and informative discussion with Prime Minister Golda Meir. I was able to discuss the state of the Israeli economy, and the impact of a defense budget taking 27-29% of the GNP, with Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, and the Governor of the Bank of Israel, David Horowitz.

In Tel Aviv I met with Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, Chief of Staff Bar-Lev, and the chief of military intelligence, General Yariv; and, at a major Israeli base, with the Commander of the Air Force, General Hod. These later discussions were particularly exhaustive and detailed, and especially helpful in view of the complex strategic situation associated with the determination of defensible borders.

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My visit, though a brief one, enabled me to meet with dozens of Israeli officials at all levels. I talked with Air Force squadron leaders, pilots, base commanders and intelligence and logistics specialists, with Army personnel, and with the young men and women who serve in the front lines of the Israel Defense Forces. I met with the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and with several members of the ministry.

I left Israel with two major convictions: First, that the Israelis are determined to provide for their own defense, even under adverse conditions, and that they have the skill, determination and courage to do so. The frontline of Western defense in the Middle East is manned by the men and women of Israel, who ask only for assistance in obtaining the tools with which to defend themselves and for the prudent diplomatic support of their friends and allies.

Second, that the people of Israel and their elected representatives deeply desire a secure and lasting settlement that will enable them to live within secure, recognized and defensible borders.

I have tried, in the attached report, to bring together my impressions of the political and military situation in Israel as I was able to observe it, and as I believe it affects the peace and security of the Middle East generally.

I wish to thank our Ambassador in Tel Aviv, Mr. Walworth Barbour, for a most kind and helpful reception.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY M. JACKSON

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THE MIDDLE EAST AND AMERICAN SECURITY POLICY

Report of Senator Henry M. Jackson

Three times since World War II -- in 1948, in 1956 and then again in 1967 -- the Middle East has been torn by general war. In the intervals between these increasingly destructive conflicts, lesser violence has been the order of the day: raids, reprisals and acts of brutal terrorism. For the people of the region, mistrust and hostility, tension and insecurity have become inescapable burdens of daily life. But for the Soviet Union, these emotions are the fertile ground upon which its political influence has been able to take root and spread.

For some time, I have been warning that as the Soviet Union approached parity with the U.S. in strategic arms, its leaders would be likely to become more energetic in trying to spread Soviet influence and more willing to run dangerous risks in the international arena. That this prospect was not groundless is indicated by the deepening Soviet penetration of the Middle East we have witnessed in recent years. One would expect this increased Soviet activity to be concentrated in those countries that are without formal defensive ties with the United States; for it is in such areas that the Soviets would be tempted to conclude that the risk of a direct confrontation (perhaps escalating to the nuclear level) is minimal.

My concern for the consequences for NATO and the West of the accelerated Soviet penetration of the Middle East was the key reason for my participation in the meeting of the North Atlantic Assembly in Europe in November, and for my visit to Israel which followed.

The Middle East and Western Security

Soviet hegemony in the Middle East would gravely imperil the vital flow of oil, essential for industry and defense, from the Middle East to Europe and Japan. 70% of Europe's oil now comes from that region; for Japan the figure is 80%, and there are no near term prospects for the development of adequate and economic alternative sources of supply. The capacity of our NATO allies to resist Soviet pressure over a prolonged crisis would be drastically impaired if the petroleum pipeline could be shut down by Moscow.

With the exception of Iraq, and to an increasing extent, Libya, the major oil producing and exporting countries of the Middle East are politically moderate, commercially aligned with the West and inclined to view with disfavor the growth of Soviet influence among their radical neighbors. Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States are, not surprisingly, extremely sensitive to the direction of American policy in the Middle East. Signs of American weakness in the Middle East in the face of increasing Soviet pressure would call into question our determination to contain Soviet influence there, thus weakening the capacity of the more moderate Arab states to resist the encroachments of Soviet influence. American vacillation or uncertainty in standing by its friends and allies in the Middle East could set in motion a crisis of confidence that would make accommodation

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with the Soviets, on Soviet terms, their only alternative to unremitting and unopposed pressure from Moscow. Moreover, uncertainty as to America's concern carries with it a high risk that the Soviet Union might drift into an unanticipated confrontation with the United States. Such miscalculation as that evidenced by the Soviets in Cuba in 1962 is extremely dangerous, and policies that increase the likelihood of miscalculation are a subtle and inadvertent invitation to extreme crises.

The Middle East is today the "soft underbelly of Europe", not only because it possesses oil that Europe requires, but because of its strategic location. Our position in the Mediterranean, to say nothing of the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, is severely prejudiced by Soviet encroachments in the countries lining its shores.

There is another reason why the United States cannot remain indifferent to political developments in the Middle East. This country and Israel, whose security is threatened by the current crisis in that region, are bound together by shared values, cultural affinities and a common ethical and religious heritage. The United States actively participated in helping to create the State of Israel, and since its founding the people of this young nation have won the admiration of the great majority of Americans by the valor they have demonstrated in standing firm before their hostile neighbors. Unlike some countries of the Middle East, Israel is a stable democracy, and a profoundly egalitarian and spirited one. These qualities, too, inspire the respect of many Americans, who feel something like a sense of personal involvement in the destiny of Israel. Today, Israel is serving as the front line of Western defense in the Middle East.

The peace and stability of the Middle East is now threatened by the aggressive ambition of the Soviet Union, which transcends the tragic conflict between Arabs and Israelis and, indeed, is based upon its exploitation. This policy of Russia to manipulate the conflict in the region for its own advantage is the key reality upon which American Middle East policy must be based.

#### Russia's Historic Ambition in the Middle East

There is, of course, nothing new about Russian interest and ambition in the Middle East and the area of the Persian Gulf. It is interesting to note that Catherine the Great, desiring to hasten the collapse of the Turkish Empire by threatening it from the rear, rendered military assistance to the Mameluk Ali-Bey of Egypt. In 1788 she urged "the chiefs of the government of Cairo" to shake off the yoke of the Suzerain and to make a treaty of alliance with her, promising them every assistance in vessels, troops, war munitions and money.

With the close of World War II and the emergence of the Soviet Union as the second ranking world power, Moscow openly pressed claims to bases on the Mediterranean shores of Africa. Before and during the Potsdam Conference, both Stalin and Molotov attempted to secure Soviet trusteeship over one of the former Italian colonies, preferably Libya. As reported in the official records, Secretary of State Byrnes felt that, "the Soviet foray into a region so close to the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf shook up Churchill more than any other episode at the Conference."

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In the postwar period it was the Soviet threat to Turkey and Persia that drove these countries to seek American support, thus initiating the sequence of events that led to the Truman Doctrine and the extension of NATO to Turkey.

After the Korean peace in 1953, the Soviets again turned their attention to the Middle East. This time they did not attempt a direct attack on the Turkish or Persian positions -- both of which were reinforced by Western-supported alliances. Instead they chose a tactic of leapfrogging and went to the Arab countries which lay beyond Turkey and Persia, particularly Egypt.

Professor Bernard Lewis, a respected authority on the Middle East, writes:

"There seems little doubt that the initial purpose of the Soviet intervention in Arab affairs from 1955 onwards was to take Turkey and Persia from the rear, and achieve a position from which these countries could be menaced and deflected from their policy of alignment with the Western powers."

Thus, using Egypt as its Trojan horse, the Soviet Union has made itself the most influential extra-regional power in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, the People's Republic of South Yemen, Libya, the Sudan and probably Algeria, countries that contain some 70% of the people of the Arab Middle East and produce in excess of 55% of its gross national product.

In Egypt the Soviet Union has established a major naval base at Alexandria; and Algiers, Latakia, Port Said, Tartus, Port Sudan, Aden and Berbera have become her ports of call.

#### The Extent of Soviet Penetration

Since 1955 the extent of Soviet penetration of the Middle East has increased at an accelerating rate. As of this date, there are 10,000 to 15,000 Soviet personnel in Egypt, a large number of whom are involved in the command, control and operation of a sophisticated network of surface to air missiles. Russian soldiers have been integrated into Egyptian units down to the company level and, for the first time in postwar history, Russian pilots are flying missions from bases located in foreign territory: the UAR. (Indeed, some of these Russian pilots have actually been shot down in air-to-air combat with Israeli pilots.) Mechanics, communications specialists, intelligence experts (whose activities are at least partly directed at the U.S. Sixth Fleet) and other technical advisers are now working alongside Egyptian military forces.

The air traffic control of the Egyptian combat air force is carried out by Russian military personnel. The extensive air defense network deployed along the Suez Canal, most of it in violation of the U.S. initiated cease-fire, has a large complement of Soviet operating personnel. In fact, the operation of the many sophisticated SA-3 missile complexes deployed throughout the UAR is entirely in Russian hands.

As of December 1970, Soviet ships call at Alexandria at a rate approaching one every four days, discharging military cargoes that include bridging equipment that could be used for a military crossing of the Suez Canal, the present cease-fire line.

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According to State Department calculations, the Soviet Union, by the end of 1967, had already poured into the Middle East military equipment and related assistance valued at more than \$3 billion, of which \$1.5 billion went to the UAR. This compares with a total of \$5.5 billion in Communist military aid to all non-Communist states from 1954 through 1967. During 1967 (before the recent heavy investment in increasingly sophisticated weapons, estimated by some at an additional \$1.5 billion), the UAR became the largest single recipient of such military assistance. Moreover, approximately one-third of all Soviet economic credit to underdeveloped countries made its way to the Middle East, with over \$1 billion going to Egypt alone.

A few figures will serve to give some indication of the level of armament the Soviets have lavished upon the UAR:

- 40 heavy tanks
- 1,200 medium tanks
- 150 amphibious tanks
- 900 armored personnel carriers
- 1,750 field guns
- 50 surface-to-surface missiles
- 12 submarines
- 19 missile firing patrol boats
- 465 combat aircraft including approximately 300 bombers and fighter-bombers
- several thousand surface-to-air missiles and associated radar and launchers

Impressive as these statistics are, they took on added meaning for me when, during my recent trip to Israel, we stopped at a military hardware "graveyard" on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. This was a huge area some two blocks long and one block wide filled with captured Soviet tanks, personnel carriers and military trucks -- a fraction of the battered remnant of the Six Day War.

The heavy equipment losses sustained by Egypt and Syria in the Six Day War, incidentally, far from discouraging the Soviets from a continuation of their unchecked arms policy in the Middle East, have actually been replaced by new and larger shipments. In the case of the UAR, for example, Soviet shipments of both aircraft and armor had reached, in January of this year, 170% of their June 1967 levels. In the Syrian case the figures are 220% and 180% respectively. Moreover, older weapons lost in 1967 have been replaced by newer, more sophisticated and costly versions in practically all categories. For example, MIG-15 and MIG-17 fighter-bombers have been replaced with the far more effective SU-7's; MIG-19's have been replaced with MIG-21's, and the T-34 tank of wartime vintage with the superior T-54/55.

#### Soviet Strategy: The Exploitation of Instability

Why has the Soviet Union lavished such large sums of money on the UAR, Syria and other Arab countries? I don't believe that it is because the Soviet Union is in genuine and unselfish sympathy with the claims of the radical Arab states to the territory of Israel. Russia voted for the partition of Palestine and



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the creation of Israel and was among the first countries to recognize Israel's independence. At the time the central motive was a desire to dislodge British influence from the area, a desire that has been supplanted by a keen desire to drive American influence from the Middle East. Indeed, this is the crux of Soviet policy in the Middle East: to drive out Western influence, and to increase its own.

In pursuit of these ambitions, the Soviets have been intriguing to keep the conflict between Arabs and Jews alive. A realistic peace settlement that guaranteed the security of all states in the area, or even a lessening of tensions and hostility -- these are precisely the things the Soviet Union does not want to see come about. Sir Bernard Lewis has stated his conviction that it was in large measure due to Russian prompting and encouragement that President Nasser took the steps that eventually culminated in the Six Day War. Since that war, Russian arms shipments have continued at an accelerating rate. And more recently, we have seen the Russians and Egyptians cooperate in a calculated and prolonged violation of the agreed cease-fire that shows every sign, from the way in which the first infringements were executed, of having been planned by Soviet personnel.

By keeping the Middle East in a state of ferment, the Soviets hope to make the radical Arab countries so dependent on them for arms, economic assistance, technical expertise and diplomatic backing that, gradually and imperceptibly, these countries will be drawn firmly into the Soviet orbit.

In short, if there were no Arab-Israeli conflict, the Soviets would invent one. The flagrant exploitation of the tragic conflict between Arabs and Jews ranks high among the cynical designs of Russia's postwar policy.

Soviet involvement in the Middle East has, more generally, been based on a policy of encouraging and assisting radical expansionist regimes to realize their designs on their neighbors. This policy encompasses not only assistance to Egypt, Syria and Iraq in their collective determination to destroy Israel, but also assistance to Iraq against Kuwait and Iran, Syria against the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and Egypt in adventures in Yemen, Lebanon and the Congo.

I have often thought that, in its foreign policy, the Soviet Union is like a burglar who walks down a hotel corridor trying the handles of all the doors. When he finds one unlocked, in he goes. Looking back on the history of the last decade, it is unfortunately all too clear that Egypt and the other radical Arab states were such unlocked doors. It is too late now to try to keep the Soviets out. But we can limit the amount of mischief they will be able to do from these bases of operation.

In this connection, it is worth observing that Soviet imperialism in the Middle East is faced with a number of very real constraints and obstacles. Arab nationalism is a powerful force, and as the Kremlin's heavy hand comes to meddle more and more openly in the internal affairs of Arab countries, we can expect the Soviet-Arab collaboration to be subjected to many strains. These strains will doubtless be aggravated by the inevitable tensions that develop when skilled personnel of an advanced country are sent to an underdeveloped country to work side by side with its less competent personnel. It is perhaps

ironic that the extent to which Arab nationalism sets itself in opposition to the Soviet ambition to dominate the Middle East will in large measure depend on whether the United States has made it clear, by its support of Israel and the moderate Arab states, that for those countries that choose it, resistance to outside domination is still very much a live option.

### Soviet Naval Policy in the Middle East

The acquisition by the Soviets of naval installations in the Mediterranean comes at a time when the desire to expel the Sixth Fleet from those waters has become a specific Soviet objective. In April 1967, not long before the Six Day War, Leonid Brezhnev told an audience of European Communists that: "There is no justification whatever for the constant presence of the U.S. fleet in waters washing the shores of southern Europe...The time has come to demand the complete withdrawal of the U.S. Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean."

The development of Mediterranean bases has been paralleled by a sharply higher level of Soviet naval activity. In the first six months of 1967, Soviet operating days in the Mediterranean were 400% greater than for all of 1963. Submarine operations there have increased, in the same period, by 2,000%. The present fleet numbers approximately 40 ships and, on occasion, reaches a figure closer to 60. Soviet jet medium bombers, based in Egypt and bearing Egyptian Air Force markings, routinely monitor the movements and training activities of the Sixth Fleet.

Soviet naval penetration of Mediterranean ports is not only facilitated by her intervention on the side of the radical Arab states in the Arab-Israeli conflict, but is an intermittent element in the conflict itself. There is no doubt that the augmenting of the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean by 10 warships in May and June of 1967 contributed to the willingness of the Egyptians and Syrians to mobilize for war.

### The Strategic Importance of the Suez Canal

The utility of the Soviet Navy, as well as its merchant fleet, would be dramatically increased by the reopening of the Suez Canal, which has been closed since the Six Day War. With the Canal open to Soviet passage, ships based in Odessa can circulate efficiently throughout the Mediterranean and Indian Oceans. With the Canal closed, Soviet naval access to the Indian Ocean is by way of Vladivostok or, from Odessa, via the Cape of Good Hope. The additional distance to, say, the Persian Gulf that Soviet ships must travel as a result of the closure of the Canal is many thousands of miles. One typical Soviet sea route helps to indicate the magnitude of the distances involved. The journey from Odessa to Bombay through the Canal is 4,200 nautical miles. The same Odessa-Bombay trip by way of the Cape of Good Hope involves a distance of 11,900 miles, nearly triple the Canal route.

More important, perhaps, is the fact that with the Canal open the Soviets can use ships of either their Atlantic or Pacific fleet to reinforce the other in the event of a diplomatic or military crisis. Finally, when the Suez Canal is open and functioning normally, it is a hard currency earner of substantial value to the Egyptians.

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For all these reasons, then, the Soviets and the Egyptians have a common interest in seeing the Canal reopened as soon as possible. To the Soviets, it is a matter of top priority, a fact which may partly explain their encouragement of the Egyptian war of attrition against Israeli forces along the Bar-Lev Line.

The opening of the Canal, which could be accomplished only by Israeli acquiescence, must be considered a trump card in any forthcoming settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. As such, agreement on this point should be withheld until a settlement of the fundamental issues is reached.

With the Canal back in operation, one of the chief incentives the Soviets have to make concessions on other outstanding differences will vanish. For this reason, among others, we share a common interest with Israel in the security of the Bar-Lev Line, the Israeli network of fortifications on the east bank of the Canal.

#### The War of Attrition Against Israel

The war of attrition, which has been quieted by the current cease-fire, claimed heavy Israeli casualties during the period from March 8, 1969 until the cease-fire went into effect on August 7/8, 1970. In July, 1969, for example, 39 Israelis were killed along the Bar-Lev Line and some 76 were wounded in intense Egyptian artillery attacks. While these figures may not appear impressive, the equivalent numbers for the vastly larger American population would be 3,000 and 6,000 respectively.

In the period following the March 8 shelling, thousands of rounds were routinely directed at Israeli positions along the cease-fire lines. There had been prior breakdowns in the cease-fire that had gone into effect upon termination of the Six Day War, but the events of March 1969 marked the beginning of what Nasser termed the "war of attrition."

About three months later, in July 1969, Israel, using her aircraft as "flying artillery", began to counter the costly Egyptian artillery attacks with air strikes against Egyptian positions on the west bank of the Canal, with the result that the number of Israeli casualties declined considerably.

The effects of the cross-Canal exchanges of larger millimeter fire have been dramatic. I visited Al Qantarah, a once thriving Egyptian town with a population of 50,000, located on the Israeli side of the cease-fire lines. Al Qantarah, which was abandoned by Egypt in the aftermath of the Six Day War, has been virtually reduced to rubble by the constant Egyptian shelling of Israeli positions nearby.

I am convinced that the Israelis are in a good military position to hold the Bar-Lev Line should they choose to do so. Israeli fortifications along the Canal have been constructed with ingenuity, and losses from Egyptian shelling could be held to tolerable levels in the event that the present cease-fire were to yield to a resumption of hostilities.

Israeli concern over a possible crossing of the Canal by an invading Egyptian force lends strategic importance to the Bar-Lev Line, although there may be ways in which reliance on this static defense can be diminished.

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The defensive importance of the Canal lies in the topography of the Sinai and the ease with which large military forces can be moved through the broad expanse of desert to the east of the waterway. I traveled by helicopter from Tel Aviv to the Canal across the northern Sinai, a trip which impressed me with the importance of the Canal as a natural barrier to large scale military movement. Nowhere in the northern Sinai is there a remotely comparable topographical feature that would impede an invasion of Israel from the west.

The Suez Canal can, of course, be crossed along virtually its entire length. Its value lies in the vulnerability of military units to interdiction both at a limited number of staging areas along the Canal and during an actual crossing. Israeli deployments of armored units in the Sinai are well positioned to prevent a crossing of the Canal, especially since the Air Force could be expected to exact a heavy price against concentrations at the Canal itself.

It is known that the Egyptian army has received equipment from the Soviets that could be used to cross the Canal. Egyptian troops have been observed training in the use of bridging equipment and amphibious operations.

The utility of the Canal as a defensive position has been seriously impaired by the installation of an extensive air defense system along its west bank. For some time prior to the U.S. initiated cease-fire of August 7, the Soviets and Egyptians had endeavored to build up an integrated air defense system along the Canal consisting of anti-aircraft cannon and surface-to-air missiles supplemented by MIG interceptors piloted by both Egyptian and Russian airmen. The Israeli Air Force was highly successful in suppressing this development while also conducting air strikes to interdict Egyptian shelling of the Bar-Lev Line. As the Soviet-Egyptian effort to deploy SAM's intensified, however, Israel faced a mounting level of attrition from ground fire.

#### The August 7 Initiative

Unfortunately, the August cease-fire made it possible for the Soviets and Egyptians to construct the air defense network that had proved unobtainable in the face of Israeli air strikes.

The August cease-fire provided that, "Both sides will refrain from changing the military status quo within zones extending 50 kilometers to the east and west of the cease-fire line [the Suez Canal]. Neither side will introduce or construct any new military installations in these zones. Activities within the zones will be limited to the maintenance of existing installations at their present sites and positions and to the rotation and supply of forces presently within the zones."

No sooner did the cease-fire with its standstill provision start, than the first Soviet-Egyptian violations occurred. The extent of the illicit movement of men and equipment removes any doubt that the violations might have been spontaneous or unauthorized. Indeed, the movement greatly exceeded the level of activity characteristic of the weeks before the cease-fire and must be seen as a calculated effort to take advantage of Israeli compliance. The hand of the Russians, even more than that of the Egyptians, was at work in the planning and execution of the violations.

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In any event, it was unwise in the extreme for the American Government, which was sponsoring the cease-fire, to agree to starting the cease-fire in the middle of the night, under the cover of darkness, an oversight that was carefully exploited by the Soviet Union and the UAR.

In my view, the calculated violation of the cease-fire strongly parallels Soviet behavior during the Cuban missile crisis. Even more than that, however, it looks like the familiar Soviet tactic of beginning negotiations -- which were then to take place under the Jarring mission -- with aggressive behavior designed to test the adversary's resolve. Berlin in 1961 comes to mind.

By failing to corroborate at once Israeli evidence of Soviet-Egyptian violations, we merely invited still further illegal movement of missiles and other military equipment in the 50km cease-fire zone. The result has been a massive Soviet-Egyptian build-up so that today the west bank of the Canal is lined with new and larger artillery and the most elaborate system of air defense ever deployed.

#### The Soviet-Egyptian System of Air Defense

The heart of the Soviet designed air defense system consists of SA-2 and SA-3 missiles supplemented by radar controlled anti-aircraft cannon and MIG interceptors. These weapon systems are, individually, of considerable effectiveness. The combination, however, provides an extremely formidable defense, and one to which neither we nor the Israelis have a ready response. The SA-3 is effective at low altitudes and, in combination with anti-aircraft cannon, makes it difficult and costly for planes to penetrate and operate by flying at extremely low altitudes. The addition of SA-3's, which have been installed in large numbers during the cease-fire and in blatant violation of its standstill provision, has thus frustrated the Israeli tactic of low altitude penetration. The SA-2 high altitude missile system, also installed in large numbers during the cease-fire, is effective against aircraft flying at altitudes not covered by the SA-3. Moreover, the recently installed SA-2's are an improved version that utilizes radar frequencies much more difficult to counter with electronic means and radar-homing air-to-surface missiles.

The position of some elements of this air defense network is such that they are effective against aircraft operating several miles on the Israeli side of the Canal. The net effect is to imperil the effectiveness of the Israeli Air Force as a means of preventing both cross-Canal fire and an actual crossing of the Canal itself.

#### U.S. Mishandling of Cease-Fire Violations

In my judgment, we should have immediately insisted through diplomatic channels that the illicitly emplaced Soviet missiles be removed prior to, and as a condition of, substantive negotiations. Our failure to do so has encouraged the Soviets in the belief that they have much to gain, and little to lose, by overt duplicity.

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In my view, the Soviets clearly gambled that the U.S. response, if any, would be weak and ineffective. That they should have engaged in this deliberate deception is serious enough; that we should have proved their estimate of our response correct is more serious still. This deliberate deception, executed within hours of an agreement, must raise considerable doubt as to the validity of Soviet assurances and agreements elsewhere.

Moreover, our bargaining position vis-à-vis the Soviets has been severely damaged. We should remember that weakness and hesitancy with respect to the cease-fire violations can have far-reaching consequences for America's bargaining reputation. Fred Iklé has stressed the importance of this reputation in the following terms:

"A government acquires a reputation much as an individual does. On the basis of its performance in past negotiations, others will impute to it a diplomatic style, certain motives and objectives, attitudes toward the use of force, a degree of political will, and other attributes of power. Bargaining strength depends not so much on what these attributes really are as on what others believe them to be. Hence the importance of this reputation...."

The diminution of confidence in U.S. assurances in a case so clearcut as the August cease-fire must affect us adversely elsewhere in the world; and this will continue to be the case even if the Soviets refrain from exploiting the appearance of our retreat. Our failure to insist on adherence to the terms of an initiative proposed and arranged in Washington, and concurred in by Moscow, may well have the effect of encouraging the Soviets to run greater risks elsewhere in an effort to consolidate the momentum of their advantage.

Israel's confidence in our willingness to stand by our repeated assurances of support for her security has been badly shaken. In Cairo and Damascus and especially among our friends and allies in the Middle East our position has suffered, rather than gained, by the impression of weakness and indecision.

Among the Arab population of the Middle East such credit as may be given for American restraint is undoubtedly going, not to Washington, but to Moscow, on the grounds that American inaction resulted from timidity in the face of Russian pressure.

#### A Policy for Rectifying the Adverse Effects of the Cease-Fire Violations

At this point in time mere insistence on a roll-back of the illicitly emplaced missiles appears futile and unproductive. It is my impression that most Israelis share this view. But this does not imply that we are without means to rectify the adverse military and political impact of the cease-fire violations. We have both military and diplomatic options available to us that may go some way in making plain to the Soviets our determination to restore the military balance that prevailed before August 7.

One such measure is the provision of adequate compensatory arms to Israel. We have begun to do that under section 501 of the Defense Procurement Act

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with the provision of some \$500 million in military credits. Among the military equipment purchased by Israel under this credit program, aircraft and devices for the suppression of surface-to-air missiles are of vital importance.

The problem of restoring the military balance in the Canal region could be remedied if we had, or were able quickly to develop, some system or systems capable of efficiently countering SA-2 and SA-3 missiles. But nothing in the current American arsenal can make more than a partial contribution to this mission. If the present uneasy cease-fire deteriorates and hostilities resume, the Israeli Air Force would pay a high price in lives and aircraft in attempting to destroy the SAM defense system. We can assist in mitigating this situation by doing what we can to assure that the Israelis will have the aircraft necessary for this purpose. A failure to do so might well force Israeli recourse to an alternative strategy, which I would hope could be avoided, of attacking less well defended targets elsewhere in the UAR if hostilities should be resumed.

My own view is that the size of the Israeli Air Force will have to be increased considerably as a result of the SAM deployment in the vicinity of the Canal, and that other equipment will be required as well. There is no denying the fact that the military balance in the Middle East has shifted as a result of the violations. This does not mean that Israel is no longer in a position to provide for its own defense. On the contrary, I am convinced that the Israeli people have the skill, determination and capability to defend themselves. Nowhere in Israel did I encounter signs of uncertainty on this point. But the military balance, in this case as in others, is not a simple matter of black or white, security or insecurity. There are, rather, degrees of security and insecurity.

Any way one looks at it, the burden Israel must bear to sustain an adequate level of security is greater now than before the U.S. guaranteed cease-fire. For one thing, a resumption of the earlier level of hostilities along the Canal would claim a higher number of Israeli casualties, both on the ground and in the air, than was the case prior to August 7, 1970.

Israel is presently spending between 27 and 29 percent of its GNP on defense, a large fraction of which is used for procurement of weapons and ordnance. For a country with a gross national product the size of Israel's, this burden of defense expenditures is severely prejudicial to economic stability, particularly in its excessive claim on limited foreign exchange reserves.

One serious, and often overlooked, problem faced by Israel is the severe economic dislocation that results from the absorption of manpower and capital by the defense effort. One plausible strategy for weakening Israeli defenses is to require that she continually maintain a high state of readiness, utilizing much of her trained manpower for defense purposes. Such a "war of economic attrition", if actively supported by the Soviets through her Egyptian and Syrian clients, is a severe threat to Israel's industry and economic development.

Israel has always in the past paid for weapons acquired in the United States. For many of the 22 years of its history Israel was forced to pay prime rates for second-hand arms. As the United States has come to appreciate its own security interest in the Middle East, Israel has had access to sophisticated aircraft and other weapons manufactured in this country. A realistic appraisal



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of the Israeli economic and financial situation indicates that it will not be possible for Israel to maintain the level of defense expenditures necessary to meet the increased threat from Soviet-supplied countries without American financial assistance, both for weapons and economic development.

Israel's immediate arms requirement for the next fiscal year (1972) will at least equal the \$500 million credit extended this year. Unless some relatively inexpensive method to suppress SAM missiles is discovered, which seems unlikely, grant aid for certain items will be needed.

I had occasion to visit installations of the Israeli Air Force, including a base at which newly acquired American Phantoms were being phased in, to visit Israeli Army units near the Suez Canal, and to meet with the officers and men of the Northern Command at the Golan Heights and of the Southern Command along the Suez Canal. None of the men or women of the Israel Defense Forces, from the Chief of Staff to the commanding officers to squadron leaders to recruits, has the slightest doubt that Israel can defend itself against any force or combination of forces in the Middle East, barring, of course, a massive Soviet invasion. All that is asked of us is help in getting the essential means in adequate quantities with which they can do the job.

In addition to assuring an adequate supply of arms, we can help affirm our determination that the calculated contravention of the August 7 cease-fire will not succeed by giving solid support to Israel's "right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries" as she returns to the Jarring talks, and in any subsequent deliberations.

Israel agreed to indirect negotiations through the offices of Ambassador Jarring in the framework of the Security Council Resolution (Number 242) of November 22, 1967. Israel, Egypt and Jordan have all accepted the Security Council Resolution; it has been rejected by Iraq and Syria. The resolution calls for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent [June 1967] conflict." It also calls for the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." Finally, Resolution 242 affirmed the necessity for (1) "guaranteeing freedom of navigation for international waterways in the area"; and, (2) for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones."

It is my conviction that the present Israeli leadership has no desire to retain territory acquired in the Six Day War,\* except insofar as the possession of certain occupied territory contributes to the goal of "secure and recognized boundaries." This was a topic on which I heard the views of the Israeli Prime Minister and senior members of the Israeli Cabinet and armed forces. Such an impression is, of course, inevitably a matter of judgment, and it should be noted

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\*All concerned parties are in general agreement that Jerusalem must remain unified under some arrangement guaranteeing the rights of Arabs and Jews and the security of and access to the holy places of the area.



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that there are individuals, and even political parties, within Israel who would press more extensive territorial claims. But the current government certainly, and the leadership likely to enjoy power for the foreseeable future, are unanimous on this point.

### The Geography of Israel and Israeli Security

It is almost impossible to travel within the pre-1967 borders of Israel without being continually in sight of territory formerly occupied by Arab armies. In Israel's largest city, Tel Aviv, more than half a million people live less than 15 miles from the formerly Jordanian village of Kalkilyah from which terrorist attacks and artillery were directed against Israel. The road from Tel Aviv to Haifa runs along a narrow strip of Mediterranean coast less than 10 miles wide at the point where the 1949 Armistice line with Jordan comes closest to the coast. The densely populated Upper Jordan Valley lies under the imposing shadow of the Golan Heights from which Syrian guns regularly shelled Israeli settlements prior to the Six Day War. The most precarious situation was that of Jerusalem, which was almost completely enclosed by Jordanian-held territory, except for a narrow corridor in the West through which there winds, along a route at points directly under the guns of former Jordanian fortifications captured during the June war, the vital highway connecting Jerusalem with Tel Aviv.

The military significance of the border changes that resulted from the Six Day War are apparent from little more than a glance at the accompanying maps.\* Before the war virtually all of populated Israel, with the exception of a strip of Mediterranean coast around the city of Haifa, was vulnerable to artillery in Arab territory with a range of 16 miles, or to Russian artillery rockets of the kind used so indiscriminately by both Arab and Vietcong terrorists. (It should be noted that the large area in Southern Israel shown on the map as beyond the range of Arab artillery is the virtually uninhabited Negev desert.) The northern and southern halves of the country could be divided by attacks from Jordan across the narrow coastal strip between Haifa and Tel Aviv. Although such an attack could not be carried out by the Jordanian army alone, the possibility made the introduction of other Arab armies into Jordan a possible casus belli and necessitated the organization of the Israeli army into separate regional commands. The much narrower corridor connecting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem was subject to interdiction by even the Jordanian army alone. Along the Mediterranean coast the Gaza Strip provided a salient that enabled the Egyptian army to deploy barely thirty miles, along flat and sandy coast, from the city of Tel Aviv and Israel's major population concentration. In the south, an Egyptian push across the open Negev desert separating the Sinai from Jordan, in some places by only a few miles, could cut the vital port city of Eilat off from the rest of the country. In the north, the Syrian army, while too weak to use its topographical advantage to attempt a major assault on the centers of Israeli settlement around the Sea of Galilee and along the upper Jordan River, could nevertheless utilize this advantage to subject towns and farms to heavy shelling, shelling which could only be halted by a difficult assault up the steep Syrian heights and a consequently large number of Israeli casualties.

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\*See Appendix.

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The problem of ground defense tells only part of the story. As the events of 1967 demonstrated, air power is potent in the Middle East, and the defense of Israel against air attack was almost impossible within the pre-1967 borders. Former Egyptian air fields at Al Arish are only 80 miles, or twelve minutes flying time, from Tel Aviv. These short distances not only mean that warning time is practically non-existent and opportunities for air defense severely limited, but they allow maximum flexibility for attacking aircraft in choice of payloads and attack routes and maximum time over targets. Syrian, Jordanian, and Iraqi air bases were located at greater distances from targets in Israel, but most of the length of their approaches was over Arab territory, with only a few miles, and fewer minutes, for detection and destruction over Israeli territory. The limited area of Israel made dispersal of her own air force difficult. Under these circumstances it is little wonder that the greatest fear in Israel during the crisis of 1967 was of catastrophic civilian casualties in air attack should the Arabs obtain even a temporary initial advantage if war were to break out. These strategic circumstances explain much of the instability in the situation produced by the 1967 Egyptian build-up in Sinai, and dictated the bold high-risk tactics of the Israeli Air Force in the opening hours of the war.

The old borders were insecure in one other important respect. Despite Israel's small area, her borders were extremely long and tortuous. This meant that infiltration could not be prevented by defensive installations and patrols, and reprisals were resorted to instead. While this had little to do with the instability of the crisis of May of 1967, it had much to do with the increase in tensions that led to it.

#### Israeli Security and the Six Day War

The changes produced by the Six Day War were dramatic. While the area controlled by Israel increased from 20,000 to 90,000 square kilometers, the length of the land borders actually decreased from 600 to 400 miles. The artillery threat against Israeli population was removed everywhere, except for small areas south of the Sea of Galilee and around Eilat. The threat of artillery fire from Jordan and invasion from Gaza was removed. Instead of facing the Egyptians across the open border in the Negev, the Israelis now have the natural defenses provided by the Suez Canal and terrain which rises to the east of it. Instead of facing Jordan and Syria up steeply rising terrain, Israel now enjoys a topographical advantage as well as the natural barrier provided by the Jordan River.

The most important changes were probably those involving air power. The distance from Egyptian air fields to Tel Aviv has been increased from 80 to more than 250 miles, with a comparable increase in Israeli warning time and opportunities for anti-aircraft fire. While air fields in other Arab countries are no further than they were before, control over a greater portion of the air routes from Iraq, Syria and Jordan greatly simplifies the problem of air defense.

The most important effect of these changes is that Israel is now able to confront an Egyptian army of 250,000 men with only a fraction of the force that was necessary in 1967 to face an Egyptian army in the Sinai of 180,000 men and barely half the armor and aircraft that Egypt has at present. Not only

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has the immediate threat to Israel's survival been removed, but the much greater freedom of maneuver which she now enjoys has enabled the fighting that has taken place since 1967 to be contained on a level below all-out war.

### The Role of the United Nations

I cannot share the optimism of those individuals who envisage a prominent role for the United Nations as guarantors of a peace settlement in the Middle East. In Israel I found no interest, much less enthusiasm, for an arrangement under which the survival of the State of Israel might be entrusted to the United Nations.

The Israeli memory of the days leading up to the Six Day War is as vivid as my own, and they are understandably unwilling to risk a repetition of the abject failure of the United Nations to keep the peace in 1967.

In preparing this report I came across a statement I made on May 20, 1967, just prior to the outbreak of the June war. I said that: "Secretary General Thant has downgraded the United Nations and has done irreparable harm to its peacekeeping potential by his precipitate action in withdrawing the UN buffer that has helped keep the peace between Israel and the Arabs for 11 years."

I can find nothing in the record of the United Nations in the intervening three and one-half years that would cause me to revise that judgment. Indeed, my view then that the Secretary General had "...pulled the props out from under the precarious Near East peace," was all too clearly demonstrated sixteen days later.

### The Importance of Defensible Borders and the "Rogers Formula"

I believe that the argument for supporting the Israeli claim to defensible borders would be a compelling one, even if our doing so were not an obvious means of carrying out our pledge that Israel would not emerge from the August 7 cease-fire in a less secure position than she enjoyed prior to it. The simple fact is that the effect of the cease-fire has been to weaken the Israeli position in the event of a resumption of hostilities, and therefore to weaken as well its bargaining position in the Jarring (and any subsequent) talks.

The United States has taken the position that any settlement of the territorial dispute arising out of the Six Day War should be based on Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories except for "insubstantial alterations" of the pre-war boundaries.

Precisely what is meant by the term "insubstantial alterations" is unclear. What is clear is that commitment by the United States to the general nature of a settlement in advance of negotiations was unnecessary and, I believe, unwise. Moreover, the public statement of this view, by weakening the Israeli position in advance, merely compounded the initial error of making gratuitous concessions.

It would be a grave mistake to apply the vague formula of "insubstantial alterations" in a manner inconsistent with the more fundamental notion of

defensible borders -- "secure and recognized boundaries" in the words of the UN Resolution. It would be much preferable to adopt a more functional formula -- perhaps something like "the minimum territorial adjustment consistent with the establishment of defensible borders", but the precise formulation is of less consequence than the logic that underlies it. I am hopeful, in this regard, that the Administration shares the view that the interests of lasting peace, as well as the credibility of the American position, lies in the search for a more, rather than a less, secure agreement, and that the crucial element here is the physical security of any revised map of Israel.

For Israel to abandon the security of her present borders in exchange for ephemeral concessions from the other side would endanger not only Israel's survival, but the peace of the world as well. Behind the present cease-fire lines Israel has room to maneuver. She can cope with crises (such as acute rises in the level at which the war of attrition is prosecuted) without precipitate action and without resort to full scale mobilization.

If, however, after a peace settlement that fails to provide for defensible borders, the same Soviet-Egyptian forces now contained behind the Suez Canal were deployed along, say, the pre-1967 borders, Israel could not wait in readiness in a purely defensive posture. She would have to meet any acute threat with the same high level of mobilization that was necessary in 1967, a level of readiness that simply cannot be sustained for more than a few days. Unless the crisis which requires it can be resolved quickly by peaceful means, the result would be a repetition of the general war that engulfed the Middle East in 1967, but with a highly uncertain outcome. Along more rather than less defensible borders, therefore, the urgency of crises is substantially lessened.

I have chosen to dwell at length on the importance of negotiating defensible borders in the context of a general settlement because I believe that a failure to do so will provide the seed, and the incentive, for continued insecurity, tension and eventual war.

It seems to me that the "Rogers formula", with its emphasis on part of the UN Resolution (withdrawal from occupied territories) at the expense of the ultimately more significant element (secure and recognized boundaries) is short-sighted and ill-advised.

The stability of any agreement will depend, above all, on the extent to which it provides physical security for Israel.

Physical security, as the UN resolution implies, prominently includes the establishment of such measures as demilitarized zones. Given the fact that the routes eastward from the Suez Canal are few in number and of limited handling capacity, there is much that could be accomplished by the total demilitarization of the Sinai, provided that resort to this device is of genuine strategic significance and not a partial and merely symbolic offering.

A secure peace must involve a clear recognition by the Arabs that the existence of Israel is no longer at issue. It must not be possible for a peace settlement to be regarded as merely a tactical step on the road to eventual liquidation of the State of Israel. Calculated ambiguity is a frequent tool of diplomacy, but ambiguity on such a fundamental issue is dangerous. The

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acknowledgment in a peace settlement of Israel's "right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries" must be made in language and by procedures so clear-cut that no conflict in interpretation is possible.

But language alone is not enough. A settlement which relies only on language will be no more successful than the Kellogg-Briand Pact renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. That agreement was tellingly characterized by Senator James Reed of Missouri as "a sort of international kiss." A settlement of the Middle Eastern conflict must be more than an "international kiss." It must not only recognize Israel's right to "secure and recognized boundaries"; it must incorporate concrete arrangements that make clear in advance that any attempt to violate those boundaries would be doomed to failure.

I wish to be perfectly clear on my view of the importance of defensible borders for Israel. Obviously the choice is not between defensible and indefensible borders but, rather, between borders that are more as opposed to less defensible. Because I am aware of the deep distress of Egypt and Jordan over the occupation of parts of their territory, I tend to the view that Israel should press for only such territory as is absolutely essential for the purposes of national defense. Moreover, I believe that Israel should consider seriously the use of demilitarized zones rather than continued occupation wherever possible, and in the context of an overall settlement. My quarrel with the Rogers formula is that it appears to prejudge the extent of the alterations that would constitute defensible borders, diminishes the Israeli bargaining position, and, I believe, ultimately encourages the Arabs to adopt a rigid rather than flexible position.

National security, for Israel as for the United States, ultimately depends on political as well as military factors, and in this regard it is worth noting that in the search for security there is a trade-off between territory and external guarantees. The extent to which guarantees and territory are interchangeable is clearly a subject for negotiation, but neither United Nations forces nor those of third countries will have the permanence of topography.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

One of the central problems in our efforts to bring peace to the Middle East has been a preoccupation with the notion that the conflict between Israel and the Arab nations lies at the core of the instability we seek to alleviate. One result is that we have been far too sanguine in our hopes for Soviet cooperation in resolving that unhappy conflict.

The Soviets understand that a Middle East characterized by peace and harmony, by stability and cooperative Arab-Israeli relations, would deprive them of their access to the continuing penetration of the Arab world. A genuine peace in the Middle East would diminish the importance of Soviet military support to Egypt; Syria and Iraq would not require large numbers of Soviet tanks any more than Egypt would require the presence of the Russian Air Force if a secure negotiated settlement could be obtained. The unhappy truth is that the Soviets, far from urging the radical Arab states to make peace with Israel, are determined to keep tensions high and to nurture the distant hope that Israel will one day

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be destroyed. If the Arab states were ever to despair of the eventual destruction of Israel, and if they were left free to determine their own best interests, I believe that the problems of the Palestinians could be solved, Israel could obtain recognition for defensible borders, and the countries of the Middle East could set about the business of cooperating in economic and political development.

American policy in the Middle East has not been sufficiently sensitive to these considerations. We have often, and especially recently, acted on the assumption that because the Soviets do not want all-out war in the Middle East they must desire all-out peace. When we come to appreciate that between the desire to avert war and the desire for peace there is an enormous range of Soviet policy objectives, we shall have taken the first essential step in designing an effective Middle East policy.

Nothing is so likely to facilitate Soviet policy in the Middle East as a settlement imposed on Israel that leaves her in the vulnerable and exposed position that existed prior to the Six Day War. Such a settlement would guarantee that the tensions upon which Soviet policy is based would continue to be exploited with tragic consequences for Arab and Jew alike.

In summary, these are my recommendations:

1. We need to recognize that the central problem in the Middle East is the Soviet drive for hegemony, and that

2. The maintenance of a high level of tension between Israel and the Arab states is the primary vehicle by which the Soviet Union seeks to accomplish this objective.

3. We should assume, therefore, that for the foreseeable future the search for peace and stability in the Middle East will be resisted, rather than supported by Soviet policy.

4. We should recognize that the best prospect for peace in the Middle East lies in discouraging radical Arab hopes for the eventual military defeat of Israel -- hopes that lead to a menacing and destabilizing alliance with the Soviet Union and that deepen Soviet influence in the region as a whole.

5. We should recognize, and make clear our determination to resist, the Soviet threat to our friends and allies in the Middle East, particularly Greece and Turkey, Iran and those moderate Arab nations who desire our support. To that end:

- (a) We should actively encourage our NATO allies to join with us in a strengthening of our common defensive capabilities in the region; and
- (b) We should take immediate steps to explore measures to increase the strength and effectiveness of the U.S. Sixth Fleet.

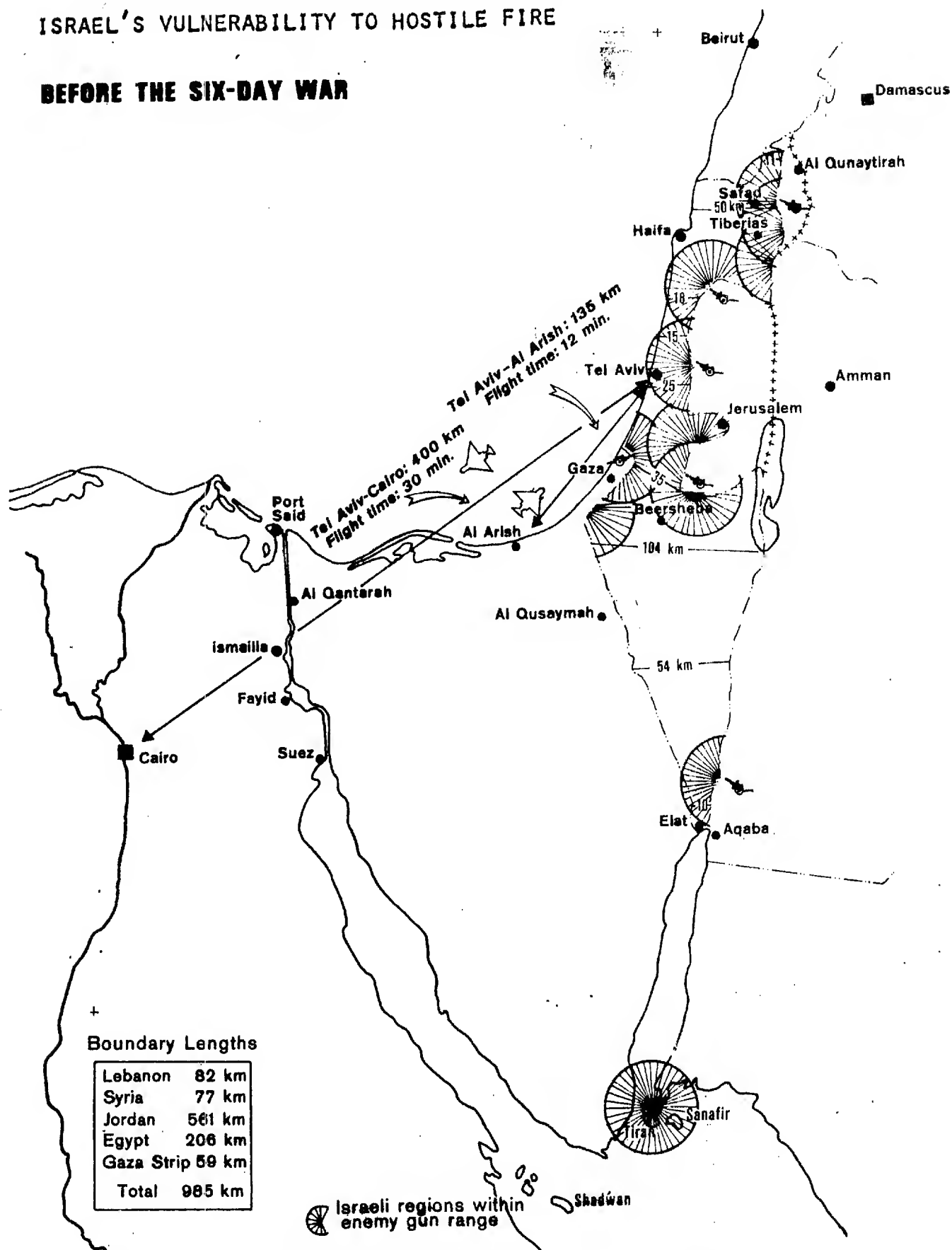
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6. In the special case of Israel, whose security is directly and immediately affected by American policy, I would recommend the following:

- (a) We should faithfully implement the basic policy expressed in Section 501 of the Defense Procurement Act of 1971 -- which is now the law of the land -- to furnish to Israel the means of providing for its own security in order to restore and maintain the military balance in the Middle East.
- (b) Recognizing that the Israeli economy can no longer sustain its recent high level of defense procurement, we should stand ready to assist Israel not only by credit sale but with grant aid for certain military equipment essential to her security.
- (c) We should assist Israel in the development of an improved indigenous defense production capability in certain areas through the provision of production rights for equipment of U.S. manufacture.
- (d) We should drop the "Rogers formula" of supporting only "insubstantial alterations" in the 1949 armistice lines, substituting, in its place, a formula that recognizes the primacy of establishing defensible borders for Israel.
- (e) Our approach to a settlement should, above all, emphasize concrete, physical arrangements to assure Israel's security which, if imperiled, merely invites Soviet exploitation and plants the seed of future war.

# ISRAEL'S VULNERABILITY TO HOSTILE FIRE

## BEFORE THE SIX-DAY WAR





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